



*Tasting Notes:* This is a soft, supple and spicy wine, brimming in black pepper and smoked meat. Expansive and broadly textured, it has underlying grip and youthful tannin, with lasting flavors of black cherry and lavender.

*Vineyard:* Best known for old vine Zinfandel and new plantings of Rhône varieties, the Dry Creek Valley is fully capable of producing world-class Cabernet Sauvignon when the right conditions come together at a particular site. When we first laid eyes on the Terrace Block at the Merrill's Vinegrove adjacent to our winery, we knew we had found such a site. Planted on a steep south-southwest facing hillside a few hundred feet up from the valley floor, the combination of sun exposure, well-draining soil, and slightly cooler temperatures create the perfect storm for richly flavored, densely structured, classic California Cabernet.

*Vintage:* While the winter preceding the 2016 growing season didn't completely alleviate the drought, it did provide at least some measure of much needed rains to dried out vines. Winter ended early and the growing season again began ahead of schedule, as it had in 2014 & 2015. Relatively mild weather continued unabated throughout spring and summer, and there was a cold snap after the early grapes were harvested that allowed a bit of extra hangtime for our later ripening Cabernet lots. The Terrace block was picked on September 27th and the grapes featured great balance and expressive flavors.

*Winemaking:* The grapes were de-stemmed into a small open-top tank for a long cold soak to encourage development of color before fermentation began spontaneously with wild yeast. Fermentation continued without the addition of any chemicals or enzymes, aided only by the heat of the sun and gravity-fed "pump-overs" once per day. After pressing the wine went into 100% new French oak barrels, aged for 24 months, and was racked only once, immediately prior to bottling.